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TAGS: [ETRD](#) [EAGR](#) [CA](#)
SUBJECT: CANADA'S NEW FOREST COMMUNITIES PROGRAM

11. (SBU) Summary: The Harper government's newly announced Forest Communities Program (FCP) is designed to help communities adapt to economic changes in Canada's forestry sector. The C\$25 million, five-year program will fund sites across Canada and encourage community-level partnerships to take advantage of emerging economic opportunities. Comment: The FCP bears investigation to see if it runs afoul of the anti-circumvention provisions of the Softwood Lumber Agreement such as several existing provincial and federal assistance programs for the forestry sector may already do so. Please give the Embassy instructions if you want us to raise specific questions on the FCP with the Canadian Government. End Comment and Summary.

12. (U) During a July 7 visit to Nova Scotia, Foreign Minister MacKay unveiled the GOC's new Forest Communities Program (FCP) to help communities develop stable local economies as they deal with the impact of economic challenges facing Canada's distressed forest sector due to rising energy costs, a strong Canadian dollar, new international competition, and reduced timber supplies. MacKay said that the program is designed to foster collaborative community efforts to help communities take advantage of new economic opportunities from foreign resources.

13. (U) The C\$25 million, five-year program will fund 11 FCP sites across Canada. Each year, the funding will support community-level partnerships and national partnership activities and operations. Natural Resources Canada (NRCan) will negotiate funding terms and conditions with the 11 successful FCP applicants.

14. (U) The FCP is based on Canada's Model Forest Program, which began in 1992 and ends this year. According to the NRCan press release, the FCP will encourage the development of knowledge, information tools and best practices to help forest communities meet the challenges of transition in the forest sector. The program will help communities to capitalize on emerging resource-based economic opportunities. The FCP, the press release continued, will foster new approaches to accommodate competing land uses, establish demonstration projects for innovative forest management approaches, and create community ventures based on new types of forest products. These solutions will be shared with other foreign communities across Canada and internationally through the Canadian Model Forest network, the International Model Forest Network and similar organizations.

15. (U) Environment Canada has supplied sketchy public information on the parameters of the 11 initial FCP program sites, which may help Washington agencies get a handle on the program:

British Columbia -----

1. Ecotrust (Vancouver Island - Clayoquot Sound)

This partnership involves the Nuu-chah-nulth First Nations and Ecotrust Canada. It intends to create economic opportunities for the forest-dependent communities of the Clayoquot Sound Biosphere Reserve, while protecting ecosystem integrity.

2. The Integrated Resources Management Partnership of Northern British Columbia (Prince George)

Building on the past success of the McGregor Model Forest, this expanded partnership will help forest-based communities in northern BC to diversify their economies and address the many forest management issues in the region.

Saskatchewan -----

3. Prince Albert Model Forest (Prince Albert)

The Prince Albert Model Forest will develop new approaches to capacity building in resource-based communities and facilitate cross-sector relationships involving forestry, agriculture, and the rapidly developing mining and energy sectors of Saskatchewan.

Manitoba -----

4. Manitoba Model Forest (Pine Falls)

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The Manitoba Model Forest is developing new partnerships with the forest industry, forest-based communities and the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs. The Model Forest is seeking new opportunities for communities to participate in informed decision-making about landscape management and to develop alternative uses of forest resources.

Ontario -----

5. Northeast Superior Forest Community (Chapleau)

This partnership will bring new economic dynamics to forest-based communities in Northern Ontario. Several communities will work together on common economic objectives with an emphasis on developing economic opportunities involving non-timber values of the forest. The Northeast Superior Forest Community also intends to use technology to stimulate economic and educational activities.

6. Eastern Ontario Model Forest (Kemptville)

Located near Ottawa, the Eastern Ontario Model Forest has a unique opportunity to demonstrate to national audiences the importance of forests and forestry to Canada's rural communities. The partnership is well-positioned to address the challenges facing rural and urban forests, including planning issues and economic diversification.

Quebec -----

7. Hautes Laurentides (Mont Laurier)

This partnership brings together a diverse group of interests to challenge the current economic realities of the forestry industry in rural Quebec. Hautes Laurentides will encourage

community development through improved forest management and explore new opportunities for recreational tourism.

18. Montagnais du Lac-St-Jean (Saguenay)

The Lac St-Jean region of Quebec has proposed a new partnership of communities, including First Nations, to seek new opportunities for the forest industry and economic development. The main emphasis will be on workforce training to ensure the long-term sustainability of the region's communities.

New Brunswick

19. Fundy Model Forest (Sussex)

With an emphasis on innovation, the Fundy Model Forest will advance the sustainable development of private forests and public forests in New Brunswick. It will encourage the development of community capacity to adjust to changes in the forest economy and promote diversification into the bio-economy.

Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island

10. Nova Forest Alliance

The Alliance represents four distinct forest areas in Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island. This unique partnership involves private landowners, First Nations, the forest and tourism industries, and the governments of Nova Scotia, PEI, and Canada. The Nova Forest Alliance will address the long-term utilization of the region's forest resources and the potential for additional social, environmental, and economic benefits.

Newfoundland and Labrador

11. The Western Newfoundland Model Forest (Corner Brook)

The Western Newfoundland Model Forest will be expanding its work with communities in watershed management and other emerging issues facing the forest sector. It has expanded its partnership to include an area in Labrador where it will use its expertise to address some of the major social, economic and environmental stresses in Innu communities.

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This part of the program will provide an excellent opportunity to demonstrate technology transfer and the sharing of knowledge.

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